

Remarks at the Sainte Mere Eglise Church in Sainte Mere Eglise, France
May 27, 2002

President Chirac, Mrs. Chirac, Mr. Mayor: Laura and I are so honored to be here. Thank you for your hospitality. We are here to pay tribute to those who sacrificed for freedom, both Americans and the French. It is fitting that we remember those who sacrificed because today we defend our freedoms—we defend our freedoms against people who can't stand freedom.

This defense will require the sacrifice of our forefathers, but it's a sacrifice I can promise you we'll make. It's a sacrifice we'll

make for the good of America and for the good of France and for the good of freedom all over the world.

It's an honor to be here. May God bless France, and may God bless America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Jacques Chirac and his wife, Bernadette; and Mayor Marc Lefevre of Sainte Mere Eglise.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Colleville-sur-Mer, France
May 27, 2002

Mr. President and Mrs. Chirac; Secretary Powell and Secretary Principi; members of the United States Congress; members of the American Armed Services; veterans, family members; fellow Americans and friends: We have gathered on this quiet corner of France as the sun rises on Memorial Day in the United States of America. This is a day our country has set apart to remember what was gained in our wars and all that was lost.

Our wars have won for us every hour we live in freedom. Our wars have taken from us the men and women we honor today and every hour of the lifetimes they had hoped to live.

This day of remembrance was first observed to recall the terrible casualties of the war Americans fought against each other. In the nearly 14 decades since, our Nation's battles have all been far from home. Here on the continent of Europe were some of the fiercest of those battles, the heaviest losses, and the greatest victories. And in all those victories, American

soldiers came to liberate, not to conquer. The only land we claim as our own are the resting places of our men and women.

More than 9,000 are buried here, and many times that number have—of fallen soldiers lay in our cemeteries across Europe and America. From a distance, surveying row after row of markers, we see the scale and heroism and sacrifice of the young. We think of units sustaining massive casualties, men cut down crossing a beach or taking a hill or securing a bridge. We think of many hundreds of sailors lost in their ships.

The war correspondent Ernie Pyle told of a British officer walking across the battlefield just after the violence had ended. Seeing the bodies of American boys scattered everywhere, the officer said, in sort of a hushed eulogy spoken only to himself, "Brave men, brave men."

All who come to a place like this feel the enormity of the loss. Yet, for so many, there is a marker that seems to sit alone. They come looking for that one cross, that